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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

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MAURITANIA DEVELOPMENT PLAN OUTLINED -- Dakar, Cete Seniaine, 19 Mar 53

On 12 March 1953, the current session of the Territorial Assembly of Mauritania was officially opened by Governor Messmer, who delivered an important speech. In this speech, he outlined the Mauritanian 1953 - 1957 Economic and Social Development Plan, whose implementation is scheduled to begin in July 1953. Governor Messmer's remarks on the subject follow in summarized form.

The plan calls for a total expenditure of 26 billion francs, i.e., approximately 30 times the Mauritanian budget and 50 times the amount spent in Mauritania to implement the current Four-Year Plan. Expenditures under the new plan will be staggered over a 4-year period on the basis of technical and financial considerations. Emphasis is to be placed on development in the so-called modern (mining) and traditional (stock raising, agriculture, and fisheries) branches of the Mauritanian economy. It is to be financed with private capital and public funds.

The plan includes the exploitation of the Fort Gouraud iron-ore deposits and of the Akjoujt copper deposits, both of which look very promising on the basis of explorations carried out to date. In principle, this project is to be financed with private capital, but the government will build the necessary roads and other means of communications for the removal of the output of the Fort Gouraud and Akjoujt mines.

In the so-called traditional branch of the economy, a special effort will be made in the field of hydraulic-engineering construction. A total of 800,000 francs is to be devoted to the construction of new water wells and dams. One of the purposes of this project is to increase and improve livestock, for which reason the veterinary services are to be developed also. In the agricultural field, 100,000 francs will be devoted to the extension of palm plantations. As for social improvements, more than 350,000 francs are to be devoted to health, education, electrification, and water supply.

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